

REMARKS

The above amendments and these remarks are responsive to the Office action dated December 30, 2004. Claims 1-9 are pending in the application. In the Office action, claims 1, 2 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over House et al. (US5,739,225) in view of Nanami (US6,544,084), and claims 3-5 and 7-9 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants thank the Examiner for the careful consideration of the application. Applicants traverse the rejections, but nevertheless amend the claims as shown above. In view of the amendments above, and the remarks below, applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 and allowance of the pending claims.

Claim 1-9

Claim 1 has been amended to recite, “an air cleaner box disposed behind the engine and above the coupling mechanism within the body and connected to an air-intake pipe of the engine, the air cleaner box having an air inlet which opens within an engine room which is formed within the body, and the air cleaner box being configured to take in air through the air inlet for the engine from outside the watercraft.” One potential advantage of such a construction is that air within the engine room may be taken into the engine and water entry into the engine may be inhibited. One example of such a configuration is illustrated in Fig. 3 of the subject application, reproduced below.

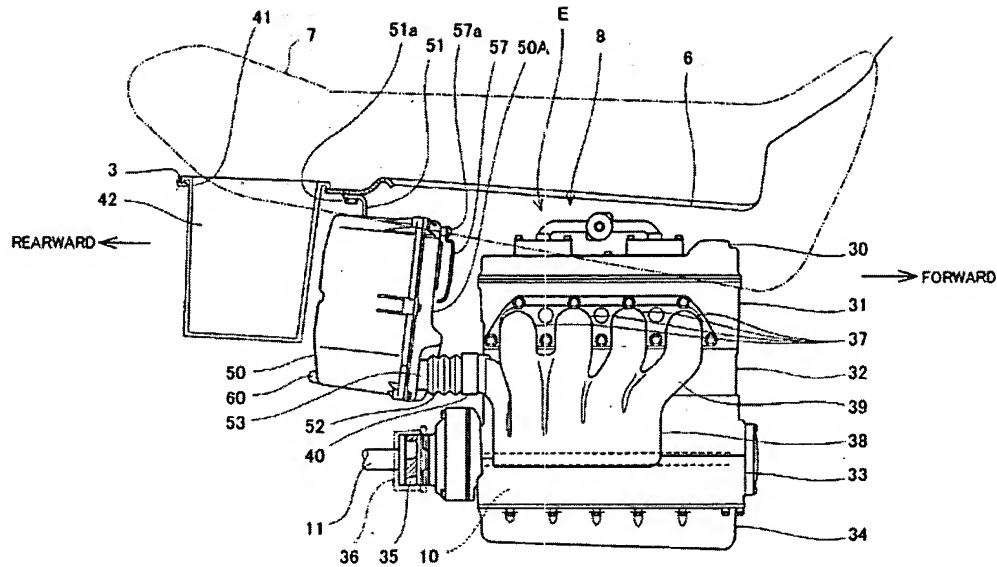


Fig. 3

Fig. 3 – Subject Application

In contrast, House does not disclose an air cleaner box having an air inlet that opens within an engine room. Rather House appears to disclose an air-intake silencer formed integrally with a seat 12 of a personal watercraft, one embodiment of which is shown in Fig. 5 reproduced below. As can be seen in the figure, the air inlets for the air-intake silencer open directly to the outside of the watercraft, rather than within an engine room.

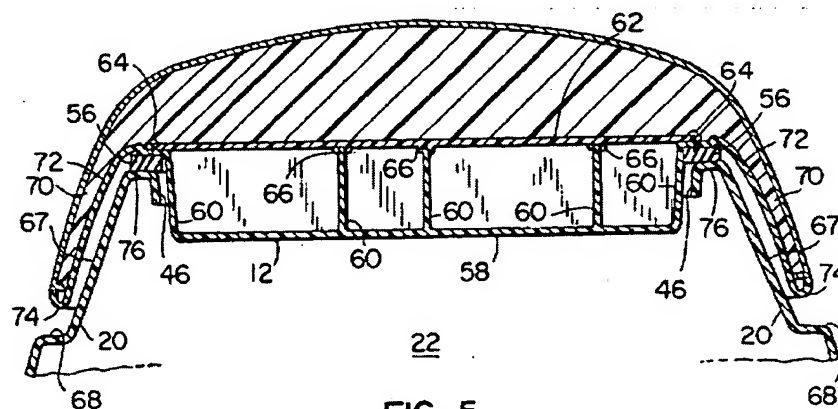


FIG. 5

Fig. 5 – House



In view of the above, applicants respectfully submit that the combination of the air-intake silencer of House with the coupling 110 of Nanami does not render amended claim 1 obvious, since the combination of House and Nanami fails to disclose each and every element of amended claim 1. Therefore, amended claim 1, as well dependent claims 2-9, are believed allowable.

Claim 10

Applicants have rewritten original claim 3, which was indicated as allowable, in independent form as new claim 10.

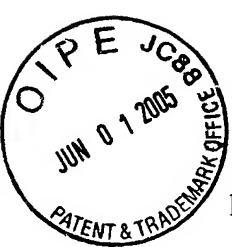
Claim 11

Applicants have rewritten original claim 4, which was indicated as allowable, in independent form as new claim 11.

Claim 12

Applicants have rewritten original claim 5, which was indicated allowable, as new claim 12 depending from claim 11, which has also been indicated as allowable.


Applicants believe that this application is now in condition for allowance, in view of the above amendments and remarks. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowance covering the pending claims. If the Examiner



has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned attorney of record.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, postage prepaid, to: Mail Stop AMENDMENT, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on May 27, 2005.



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Respectfully submitted,

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